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ABSTRACT

Community-based learning (CBL) is a structured approach to learning and teaching that connects meaningful community experience with intellectual development, personal growth, and active citizenship. Enthusiasm for CBL is emerging in Australia and elsewhere because it is seen as the following: strategy for whole-school reform, especially in relation to curriculum and organizational and professional development; means of improving student learning and achievement; and a tool for regional and social development. CBL's twin goals are to improve student learning and achievement and foster community and social development. CBL is learner-centered, outcome-based, real-life, and cooperative learning. CBL may have at least seven dimensions that reflect the different types of CBL activity: charity, motivation, employment, enterprise, research, service, and advocacy. CBL programs may be initiated by service agencies or by education systems and schools. One way to generate and sustain the quality of CBL is to identify a set of criteria for assessing CBL quality. Possible criteria include the following: cooperation, outcomes, structure, integration, ownership, reflection, audience, and evaluation. A diverse range of CBL activities and programs is developing in Australia, North America, and Europe. (The report contains 17 references and 7 endnotes. Appended are examples of CBL programs and a CBL response sheet.) (MN)

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ED 412 335

Community Based Learning

Adding Value to Programs Involving Service Agencies and Schools

A discussion paper prepared for the Dusseldorp Skills Forum

Jim Cumming

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August 1997

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Community Based Learning:
Adding Value to Programs Involving Service Agencies and Schools

Jim Cumming

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PROLOGUE

Community Based Learning (CBL) is about the development and application of knowledge, skills and attitudes in real-life settings and contexts. Advocates of CBL regard the community as a resource for learning that can be used to increase not only educational achievement, but also economic and social development. They view CBL as a means of engaging participants in meaningful activities and generating multiple benefits. For example, it is seen as developing generic employment related competencies in young people as well as diversifying and improving education.

The rhetoric of CBL is persuasive. Who could be against an approach that is 'learner-centred' and 'outcome-based'? How could one disagree with learning that is contextualised and that integrates theory with practice? It is significant also that interest in, and support for, CBL is gaining momentum in sectors such as community services, health and justice, as well as education, training and employment.

While a sense of enthusiasm for CBL is emerging in Australia and elsewhere, there are a number of questions that need to be addressed, such as:

- **Why is CBL so important at present?**
  (e.g. Are conventional approaches to learning and teaching failing to keep pace with technological, economic, social and other changes? Should CBL be concerned mainly with improving *equity & social justice*, *education reform* or *community development*?)
- **What are the defining features of CBL?**
  (e.g. Should it be implemented *in*, *with* or *for* the community? Does it need to embrace each of these, as well as other characteristics?)
- **Which students should be involved in CBL?**
  (e.g. Should it be for *all* or *some* students? Is it particularly appropriate for younger or older adolescents? Should 'at risk', 'non-academic', 'high achieving' or other groups of students be identified as target audiences?)
- **How should CBL be resourced?**
  (e.g. Does it require *additional* or *re-allocated* levels of physical and human resourcing? To what extent is continuous and shared resourcing a requirement for effective CBL?)

It needs to be emphasised that CBL is not a new concept. There is a history of substantial innovation and development in the education sector (e.g. the Disadvantaged Schools Program); the service sector (e.g. the School Community Involvement Program); and other sectors (e.g. Community Health and Juvenile Justice Programs). In terms of future development, we need to build on the knowledge and expertise that has been created in such programs, especially in a context of inter-sectoral and inter-agency cooperation.

The arguments for CBL are compelling. Many educators and parents who have participated in these programs report improvement in young people's self-esteem and motivation, as well as their cognitive and skill development. Employers, politicians and civic leaders tend to emphasise the economic benefits associated with productivity (e.g. the development of services, products and performances), as well as efficiency (e.g. the sharing of personnel, facilities and technology).

Some academics and commentators focus on the importance of CBL in a wider context. In the 1995 Boyer Lectures[1], for example, Eva Cox identified 'social capital' as the basis upon which a truly civil society is built, and emphasised the value of learning and working with

others. Cox argued that social capital is the pre-eminent and most valued form of capital (in relation to financial, physical and human capital), given that it "establishes networks, norms and social trust, and facilitates coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit". In her view, social capital not only acts as the glue that holds communities, societies and nations together, but also "may well be the prerequisite for economic growth."

However, not all are convinced of the benefits of CBL. Some parents and teachers argue that this form of learning detracts from more 'academic' studies and intellectual pursuits. There is a view that learning in the community is less rigorous and demanding, and represents a 'soft option' for students. Others believe that should they so desire, students can undertake learning in the community during their own, rather than in school time.

There is also a view that exploitation is a potential problem for CBL. It is argued that students and schools, as well as community agencies and organisations, can become involved in matters that are the prime responsibility of others. For example, students could be invited to participate in the provision of services to the poor, elderly or those with disabilities, as a means of compensating for related cuts in expenditure by public or private authorities. Similar arguments were mounted when work experience and related vocational programs were first introduced (e.g. the use of students as unpaid labour by unscrupulous employers).

Hence, there are several issues regarding the development of CBL at present including:

- **Roles and functions**
  (e.g. curriculum development; student placement, supervision and support; human and physical resourcing ...)
- **Moral, ethical and legal issues**
  (e.g. maintaining client confidentiality; dealing with conflicting principles, values and beliefs; vetting of community-based personnel; maintaining adequate insurance ...)
- **Quality and sustainability**
  (e.g. common and agreed outcomes and processes; explicit evaluation criteria; authentic assessment and reporting; short and long-term development ...)

At the same time a number of creative tensions can be identified within and between groups from the education, community and other sectors. For example, a degree of territoriality can exist with regard to programs, sites and audiences. In a climate of economic rationalism especially, there can be intense competition for available resources (e.g. when funds are tied to a limited number of national or state priorities). Tensions can also arise in the context of philosophical and methodological differences, or a group's desire to maintain its hard-earned position in terms of contemporary status, power and influence.

One of the main objectives of this paper is to raise the level of debate on key questions and issues regarding CBL, with a view to furthering its conceptual and practical development. As the title suggests, another is to explore the potential for adding value to current programs involving service agencies and schools. Representatives from all sectors who would like to establish a dialogue and work cooperatively on CBL in future are invited to register their interest by completing the Response Sheet (see Appendix 2).

Acknowledgement
The contribution to an earlier draft of this paper by representatives from a range of education and community groups is gratefully acknowledged.

INTRODUCTION

Learning occurs in a range of different contexts. People develop knowledge, skills and values at home and through their participation in social, recreational or cultural groups. They also learn in educational institutions such as schools and colleges by undertaking accredited programs and courses. Participation in the workplace through paid and unpaid employment and training, is another means by which people extend their expertise and understanding.

Traditionally, the worlds of education, training, work and community development have been regarded as quite separate and distinct. Highly specialised infrastructures, philosophies and practices have been established and maintained. The connections between learning that occurs at home, school, work or the community in general have rarely been made explicit. In some settings, individuals have actually been encouraged to disregard what they have learned in previous environments.

The nature and extent of economic, technological and social change in recent times, however, has led many to challenge the separation of these worlds. Some have pointed to the inefficiencies associated with the fragmented nature of formal education and training. Others have identified teaching practices that have been slow to mainstream contemporary developments such as personal computers, multi-media and the Internet. A declining sense of community, in terms of youth alienation and social disharmony has also been noted.

So what is being done to break down the barriers that exist between these worlds? Much is being achieved through the internal reform of institutional structures and practices. Organisations are establishing meaningful links and developing productive partnerships, both within and beyond their own sectors or spheres of influence. At the same time, a few organisations whose charters cross traditional boundaries are also seeking to transform existing learning environments in ways that will benefit all stakeholders.

The Dusseldorp Skills Forum is one such organisation. The stated mission of this non-profit agency is to create fundamental improvements in educational, workplace and community practices that result in every Australian gaining the skills, capabilities and opportunities for productive and rewarding roles in contemporary society. The Forum is achieving this through initiatives that include the support and development of lighthouse projects and the creation and extension of networks. It also acts as a facilitator by bringing together groups who have implemented innovative projects, with a view to adding value to those initiatives and extending the boundaries of current research and development.

This discussion paper has been commissioned by the Forum as a means of generating informed debate among individuals, organisations and systems interested in developing further the theory and practice of CBL in Australia. One purpose of the paper is to identify various models and approaches that have been implemented in recent years. Another is to explore the nature and extent of the partnerships and programs that have been developed between service agencies and schools. Of particular interest are the issues confronting these groups, and the potential for resolving them through the development of cooperative strategies and the framing of future directions.

In addition to stimulating discussion, the Forum is keen to obtain responses to the paper from the education, business, community and other sectors. For example, the views of students, teachers, parents, employers, volunteers and citizens would be particularly valued. While select examples of programs involving CBL have been recorded in the paper, this might constitute just the tip of the iceberg. Similarly, there may be other relevant research

and development, planning proposals and evaluation reports that are not well known beyond their source of origin. Hence, in disseminating this paper, the Forum is seeking feedback (see Appendix 2) in the form of:

- information regarding contemporary practices, approaches and innovation on CBL in the form of case studies, articles, evaluation reports etc;
- comments on the value of the analysis, strategies and next steps that have been proposed in the text with regard to the current and future development of CBL; and
- expressions of interest in contributing to the further development of CBL in Australia (e.g. knowledge and expertise, pilot projects, training and PD, materials, resources etc).

1. COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING

Purposes

For the purposes of this paper, CBL is defined as a structured approach to learning and teaching that connects meaningful community experience with intellectual development, personal growth and active citizenship. Some of the defining features of CBL include:

- individuals other than teachers participate actively in the student learning process;
- students are engaged in the planning, implementation and evaluation of activities;
- learning is located beyond the confines of the classroom, and in most cases the school;
- outcomes are generated for the community as well as students and other participants.

But why is CBL being implemented? What is it seeking to achieve? Who is promoting it? First, CBL can be viewed as a strategy for whole school reform, especially in relation to curriculum, organisational and professional development. Much has been written about the extent to which conventional approaches to education are failing to meet the needs of the majority of students. For example, practices that place the teacher in the role of expert, with the student as the passive recipient of knowledge, are seen as inappropriate in a rapidly changing world. Technological advances mean that students are now subjected to a barrage of information and perspectives, emanating from sources that lie beyond the individual teacher or school. Schools need to be structured and resourced in ways that will increase students' capacity to process and use information for productive purposes.

Second, CBL can be used as a means of improving student learning and achievement. Rather than preparing students for the future by presenting them with pre-packaged information and 'correct answers' to pre-conceived questions, teachers are encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their own learning. An essential strategy is to engage students in exploring real-life issues and problems that address both personal and social concerns. In this way, the development of key learning areas and competencies can be addressed through activities that involve students in applying and extending their knowledge and skills in authentic contexts. Essentially, young people need increased opportunities to act, reflect and present the outcomes of their work to interested parties.

Third, CBL can assist in the process of regional and social development. In addition to extending their own expertise, students can contribute to the process of building or re-building communities at various levels ranging from local to global. Considerable media attention has been given recently to the problems facing different kinds of communities. For example, rural areas are feeling the impact of the loss of financial, commercial and government services to larger centres; ethnic communities and minority groups are

experiencing discrimination and vilification; and few communities remain unaffected by the impact of drugs and violence. Students need to be provided with increased opportunities to contribute in meaningful ways to community discussion and action on matters that affect them and their fellow citizens.

Principles

The twin goals of CBL are the improvement of student learning and achievement together with community and social development. It is not surprising, therefore, that CBL is underpinned by a number of basic principles and beliefs that reflect those goals. The student is seen to be at the centre of the learning process, while remaining connected to, and supported by teachers, parents and other community members. The emphasis is on engagement in meaningful and productive work that has a clear educational focus, with well-defined outcomes. It is important that students participate in activities that are real rather than simulated, and that the main results of their work be exhibited, presented and acknowledged in community settings. A dot point summary of the basic principles of CBL is outlined below.

- **Learner-centred**
  Students will develop a sense of ownership with regard to the learning activity and assume an appropriate level of responsibility for planning and development.
- **Outcome-based**
  All partners will agree in advance on the knowledge and skills that are to be developed by students and the means by which they are to be assessed.
- **Real-life**
  The learning activity will focus on addressing a specific problem, issue or practice that has been negotiated with teachers and other relevant partners.
- **Cooperative**
  All partners will be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the learning activity, contributing resources as appropriate.

Dimensions

A diverse range of programs incorporating CBL has been implemented in Australia, North America and Europe, reflecting the broadly based definition and principles outlined above. A summary of contemporary CBL projects and activities from around Australia can be found in Appendix 1. It should be noted that this is a selection of examples only, and that an objective of this paper is to establish a more comprehensive digest (see Appendix 2).

It is possible to identify at least seven dimensions of CBL which reflect different types of activity (see Table 1). The primary focus of some programs is student motivation (e.g. for at-risk or alienated students), with an emphasis on making practical products and other hands-on activities. Other programs are concerned mainly with community service, and engage a cross-section of students in activities that involve groups with special needs such as the elderly or those with disabilities.

In addition, it is possible to identify different levels of CBL. The nature and extent of learning and development in charity or enterprise programs, for example, might be quite different to that which occurs in research or advocacy programs. This is not to suggest that some programs are better than others, but rather to highlight the need for a mechanism for making informed judgements about the quality of CBL programs. A key question is: To what extent is CBL improving student learning/achievement and community/social development?

Table 1 Some Dimensions of Community Based Learning*

	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5	No. 6	No. 7
Focus	Charity	Motivation	Employment	Enterprise	Research	Service	Advocacy
Outcome	Revenue	Products	Competencies	Ventures	Recommendations	Support	Changes
Program	Additional	Alternative	Vocational	Enrichment	Academic	Outreach	Social action
Activity	Fund raising Product sales Walkathons	Gardening Construction Maintenance	Work experience Career education Work placement	Mini-business Performance Management	Surveys Interviews Analysis	Elderly Disabilities Homeless	Justice Safety Environment
Example	*Students raise funds for World Vision's 40 hour famine by obtaining sponsorship and donations from community members.*	*Students become engaged in hands-on and 'real-life' activities with community support such as the repair and sale of items (e.g. bicycles, furniture etc).*	*Students undertake structured work placements that involve interaction with local mentors from an industry sector in which they plan to pursue post-school training.*	*Students design, manufacture and market their own product or service, often utilising the expertise of small business people and entrepreneurs (e.g. YA program).*	*Students conduct community-based research on an identified problem (e.g. increased levels of vandalism) with a view to identifying key factors and strategies for action.*	*Students establish a caring relationship with an elderly citizen with a view to providing a service that meets his/her needs (e.g. companionship or physical exercise).*	*Students plan, implement and evaluate a project designed to change attitudes/behaviours in their community in response to an identified problem (e.g. racism).*

* It should be noted that the purpose of this framework is to identify the diverse range of programs and approaches that have been implemented in CBL, not to perpetuate narrow or stereotypical perspectives.

2. PROGRAMS INVOLVING SERVICE AGENCIES AND SCHOOLS

Established Practices

Service agencies have worked with schools in a number of ways. Three of the most common practices include materials, speakers and programs. Most organisations provide **materials** in the form of brochures, booklets, newsletters, posters and videos containing information about their aims, objectives and work. These are often used to raise awareness about community issues and needs, and to provide information that can be used by students as part of their studies.

Several groups provide **speakers** to address small and large groups of students, as well as teachers and parents. In some cases, efforts are made to schedule the visits to coincide with the implementation of a curriculum unit, program or activity. In others, they are used as part of a planning process to generate a community-based program. Occasionally, agencies utilise resources to employ or second professional officers to fulfil educational or public relations roles. More often than not, honorary members or volunteers agree to undertake speaking engagements.

A few groups have initiated specific **programs** designed to further the goals of their organisations and to support students in their learning. Such projects can be developed independently with the support of targeted funds, or collaboratively with an education system, region or school. Some of these programs have been operating for more than twenty years. A selection of programs is listed in Table 2.

Table 2. A Selection of Programs Initiated by Service Agencies

Program	Outline	Agency
School Community Involvement (SCIP)	Encouragement and support for primary and secondary students in finding out about their community - through placements and projects - and exploring active citizenship.	Volunteer Centres e.g. Volunteering NSW (02) 9231 4000
Skills for Adolescence	Promotion of positive social attitudes and active citizenship; prevention of negative behaviours such as violence; and the addressing of issues such as alienation.	Lions-Quest International (02) 9369 2027
Skills for Action	Development of service learning that engages youth in learning skills, gaining knowledge and applying them in real-world settings - e.g. at school, home, community and workplace.	Lions-Quest International (02) 9369 2027
Interact	Each Interact club carries out at least two projects per year. One serves the school or community and the other furthers international understanding.	Rotary International (02) 9635 3537
Walk Against Want	Raising awareness of world poverty and hunger, through a fund-raising event that engages students in many schools across Australia.	Community Aid Abroad (02) 9264 1399
Jump Rope for Heart	Raising of funds and community awareness regarding the causes and prevention of heart disease through students' physical education (e.g. skipping and aerobics).	National Heart Foundation e.g. (06) 282 2144

Schools have also worked collaboratively with service and other agencies in the community sector. One of the most common activities is **fund-raising**. Student enthusiasm for seeking donations, selling items and gaining sponsorship for a range of causes is well known. Most families will be familiar with the demands associated with walkathons, danceathons and other forms of physical activity designed to generate revenue for registered charities. While some students design and implement their own fund-raising efforts, others prefer to participate in the orchestrated campaigns operated by local, national and international organisations. For example, many schools raise funds for appeals such as Red Nose Day, Daffodil Day and the 40-Hour Famine.

School students have been involved in the provision of **services** to community members and groups. Some undertake these activities as part of a studies of society or religious studies course, while others do so in an extra-curricular capacity. Either way, students establish relationships with, and provide services for, those with special needs such as the elderly, people with disabilities and the terminally ill. For example, a group of students at Patrician Brothers College Fairfield is involved in the preparation and provision of a 'meals on wheels' service to elderly citizens in their local area.

Education systems and schools have also initiated special **programs** that involve structured forms of interaction with community agencies. In many cases, such programs have been designed primarily for particular groups, such as 'at risk' or 'gifted students'. A broad range of community-based activities has been implemented including placements, mentoring and action research. Some students have been engaged in practical activities such as manufacturing or market gardening, while others have been involved in the provision of services such as analysis or advice. A selection of programs is listed in Table 3.

Table 3. A Selection of Programs Initiated by Education Systems and Schools

Program	Outline	Agency
Students at Risk	Provision of more relevant and practical experiences for alienated students that may involve placements in, or collaboration with, community centres.	National/State
Gifted and Talented	Provision of extension activities for gifted students that may include mentoring and research experiences with leaders in community agencies (e.g. local government).	National/State
Country Areas	Provision of practical experiences for rural and isolated youth that may involve placements in, or collaboration with, service providers (e.g. emergency services).	National/State
Support Services	Encouragement and support for schools to interact with service providers (e.g. health, welfare, community) to promote integrated service provision for students/families in need.	State
Student Participation	Involvement of students in action research designed to address an issue or problem identified in the local neighbourhood (e.g. vandalism) with a view to possible action.	School
Extra Curricular	Raising of funds or conduct of activities by students to support community organisations or charitable institutions (e.g. provision of services or products).	School

Issues

Service Agencies

Most service agencies have limited **resources** available for working with schools. Finding experienced personnel to establish and maintain effective liaison with teachers and students; to plan and develop projects and activities; and to monitor and evaluate educational initiatives can be extremely difficult. The infrastructures of community organisations tend to be at a relatively low level, with many performing extraordinary work, often 'on the smell of an oily rag'. While most service agencies are keen to strengthen their links with schools, they frequently lack the resources to do so.

The nature and extent of the **expectations** placed on community groups can sometimes be overwhelming. Some find themselves swamped periodically by many different schools, with requests for a broad range of services including information, speakers, mentors, work experience and structured work placements. Other agencies find that when they do become involved with collaborative projects, they find themselves faced with very challenging situations (e.g. working mainly with alienated students). They can also find themselves entangled in a range of administrative and bureaucratic procedures that detract from the main goals of student learning and community development.

Another significant issue for service agencies is **preparation**, both at the school and community sites. With regard to the former, students and staff do not always have an adequate understanding of the purpose, goals and outcomes of the agency and its programs. In terms of the latter, there is not always the opportunity or the resources to train and support volunteer and other personnel that are to be involved. Hence, projects and activities can flounder when there is a lack of clarity with regard to responsibilities, tasks and support.

Schools

Schools that are keen to establish effective links with service agencies often face competing **demands** from both external and internal sources. Education system requirements, an over-crowded curriculum and rigid organisational structures - especially 'the timetable' - can militate against innovation and change. So too, can entrenched attitudes on the part of some teachers and parents, who tend to regard student-centred and experiential learning as less rigorous than teacher directed and content-based approaches. Sometimes 'in principle' support is given to the strengthening of links between school and community, however, this is not always reflected in the longer-term behaviours of teachers and administrators.

At an operational level there are a number of issues associated with the **logistics** of linking schools with the community sector. Teachers are often concerned about the number and suitability of sites, volunteers and mentors for placements and activities. The implementation of cooperative projects frequently involves technical matters such as the insurance and transportation of students in out-of-school settings. For example, educational administrators and authorities remain concerned about the potential for litigation with regard to duty of care (e.g. vetting of adults other than teachers, supervision, accidents etc).

Establishing and maintaining the **quality** of community-based programs is also an important issue. While there is often rampant enthusiasm and a flurry of activity in making inaugural links with service agencies, these can be hard to sustain. A common feature of programs is that there can be a good deal of 'busywork' on the part of students, with insufficient attention being paid to effective learning and student achievement. For example, students and in some cases teachers and parents, can get carried away with the task or job at hand, and lose sight of the negotiated/specified learning outcomes.

Gaps

While significant links have been established between schools and the service sector, there has been **limited evaluation** of community-based programs. Much of the evidence about developments in this area is anecdotal, with a wealth of knowledge seemingly locked inside the heads of coordinators and key personnel. A selection of case studies is included in this paper (see Appendix 1), however, many examples of good practice do not appear to have been even documented, let alone reviewed. A reason that is frequently advanced for the lack of research in this area is that practitioners are simply too busy running activities and 'keeping their heads above water', and allocate little or no time for the recording of outcomes and processes associated with their programs.

Largely as a consequence of limited research and development, there has been considerable **reinventing of the wheel**. Rather than learning from the knowledge and experience of others, dedicated educators and representatives from community groups as a matter of necessity, have established projects from a relatively under-developed knowledge and skill base. Participants fall into similar traps and repeat a number of avoidable mistakes. Hence, many activities have tended to be ad-hoc, short-term and on the 'fringe' rather than in the mainstream of either curriculum or community development. Difficulties in gaining access to extended funding, time and support have meant that various pilot and experimental initiatives rarely continue or become self-sustaining.

There has been a **lack of continuity** associated with the implementation of community-based learning activities. Several coordinators have found that having established a successful pilot program, funding is withdrawn subsequently. A good deal of seed funding is granted with an expectation that pilot programs will become self-sustaining within the short-medium term. There is evidence to suggest that community-based programs are the first to be dropped when there is any level of fiscal or educational tightening (e.g. funding cuts or 'back to basics' movements). In addition, it is often the case that personnel involved in community-based programs are either promoted or simply move on to other fields of endeavour. This invariably reduces the chances of building on the progress that has been made and extending productive partnerships in new directions.

3. STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Criteria

One way of generating and sustaining the quality of CBL is to develop a set of common and agreed criteria for quality. When the essential characteristics of programs and activities are made explicit, individuals are in a much better position to make judgements about programs and activities. The primary objective associated with such criteria is to assist participants and stakeholders in determining the effectiveness of CBL activities. A draft set of criteria is outlined in Table 4, and is followed by a series of supplementary questions. One possibility would be to use the criteria as a form of checklist, however, a more productive strategy would be to establish a simple rating scale (e.g. 1-10 or A-E) for use by a range of program participants (see Appendix 2).

Table 4	Draft Criteria for Assessing the Quality of CBL Programs
Cooperation:	Schools and service agencies work in genuine partnership
Outcomes:	What is to be learned/produced and how it is to be assessed is made explicit
Structure:	Student experiences are planned, sequenced and scheduled
Integration:	Programs are developed as part of mainstream curriculum and assessment
Ownership:	Students assume responsibility for planning and implementing tasks
Reflection:	Students analyse the implications of their community-based experiences
Audience:	Student outcomes are presented/exhibited to community members
Evaluation:	Programs and activities are continuously reviewed and developed

Cooperation

- Are representatives from participating organisations (e.g. schools, service agencies, local councils etc) as well as the students themselves, involved in collaborative planning and development?
- Are the leaders and governing bodies of participating organisations providing moral and practical forms of support?
- Is there a sharing of human, physical and other resources on the part of participating organisations?

Outcomes

- Have intended learning outcomes been negotiated and communicated in advance (e.g. students, teachers and project partners)?
- Do all participants understand and accept the assessment and reporting procedures (e.g. use of criteria, log books and portfolios)?
- Are all participants deriving benefit from the experience (e.g. are students from the full range of abilities and backgrounds experiencing success)?

Structure

- Has there been adequate preparation prior to the implementation of the learning activity?
- Are the tasks, timelines and responsibilities associated with the learning activity understood by all parties?
- Are the learning experiences coherent and sequenced (e.g. will future activities build on the outcomes of former experiences and link to work placements, part-time work etc)?

Integration

- Is the student's experience linked directly to requirements associated with key learning areas and key competencies?
- Does the experience involve 'real-life'/'real-world' situations and contexts?
- Are strategic links being made between education, training and the worlds of paid and unpaid work?

Ownership

- Does the student have a say in the selection and organisation of the experience?
- Is the student responsible for essential components of the experience?
- Is the student exercising reasonable control over his or her learning?

Reflection

- Is the student encouraged to think about and document significant understandings and feelings generated as part of the experience?
- Is the student encouraged to communicate the meaning and impact of the experience to others?
- Is the student encouraged to consider the implications of the experience for her/himself and other participants (e.g. strategies for improvement)?

Audience

- Are aspects of student work exhibited or presented to groups beyond those involved (e.g. within and between schools)?
- Are the outcomes of the experience communicated to the wider community?
- Are external groups invited to respond and/or to add value to the outcomes of students' work (e.g. products, services, recommendations etc)?

Evaluation

- Are participants and partners involved in the review and development of projects?
- Are external agents and critical friends involved in the evaluation of projects?
- Are formative and summative evaluation exercises implemented regularly?

Leverage Points

Service agencies and schools need to explore the full range of opportunities available for introducing or extending their work in CBL. Both groups need to identify points of leverage within existing programs, as well as emerging developments within relevant sectors. For example, a number of the Commonwealth government's recent initiatives in education could be considered with a view to adding value to existing partnerships, or to establishing new joint ventures in CBL. It should also be noted that similar or related activities are currently under way in most States and Territories.

Civics and Citizenship Education

In May 1997, the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training announced details of a new national program entitled 'Discovering Democracy'. Over the next four years, $17.5 million will be allocated across the portfolio 'to raise the levels of civic knowledge of students'. In a ministerial statement[2], Dr Kemp stated that "the Commonwealth is driven by the conviction that we can, indeed must, prepare students to act as responsible citizens in this nation and encourage effective participation" (p.1).

The focus of the schools' component will be on increasing students' knowledge and skills in civics and citizenship. Students in Years 4-10 will pursue four themes, namely Principles of Democracy, Government in Australia, the Australian Nation and Citizenship. While there is considerable emphasis on content knowledge, the need for particular skills for effective citizenship is also acknowledged. For example, in announcing the new national program, Dr Kemp stated that "students will be assisted to learn the skills of participating in voluntary associations and performing school and community services." (p.4).

Enterprise Education

During the triennium 1997-99, $3.2 million will be provided for the development of enterprise education in upper primary and secondary schools. In announcing the program, Dr Kemp stated that "enterprise education is about giving young people the skills to succeed in all aspects of life". It would appear that Commonwealth activity in enterprise education has been in response to a recommendation of the Karpin Report[3] that the formal education system be used to expose students to the value of enterprising and entrepreneurial behaviour.

In a joint paper prepared by the Department of Employment, Education and Training and the Department of Industry, Science and Technology[4], enterprise education was defined as follows. "Inculcating in individuals, through the education process, the necessary mindset and skills to recognise opportunity, to manage risk, and to mobilise and manage resources for a social or economic purpose. Generally, it means developing the qualities needed to be an enterprising person such as the ability to tackle problems, take initiative, persevere, be flexible and work in teams. Specifically, it means taking part in projects, usually small-scale business and *community enterprise projects*, designed to develop those qualities. It is *highly interdisciplinary and experientially based*" (emphasis added).

Students in Years 5-8

Various projects have been implemented during the 1990s concerned with improving learning outcomes for young adolescents. A number of these have involved the trialling and development of innovative approaches to curriculum, teaching and organisation. Seminars and workshops have been organised in most States and Territories to explore **the middle years of schooling**, and to identify ways in which conventional practices and entrenched cultures of upper primary and junior secondary education might be transformed.

During 1996-97 a national project[5] is being funded by the Commonwealth to explore a number of issues in middle schooling including integrated curriculum and authentic assessment. Strategies for empowering students and engaging communities in meaningful ways are being developed. A national forum will be held in August 1997 with a view to reaching agreement on a set of principles and directions for generating greater coherence and practical support for the development of effective middle schooling across Australia during the next five years.

It can be argued that CBL has particular relevance for middle schooling. At both upper primary and junior secondary levels, young adolescents have a range of developmental needs that are concerned with identity, relationships and empowerment. Contemporary research reveals that student alienation[6] and learning progress[7] are issues of concern in the middle years.

Students in Years 9 and 10

There is evidence to suggest that a significant number of students in Years 9 and 10 as well as in Years 5-8 are 'switched off', 'tuned out' and not deriving benefit from their schooling experience. This is occurring in students from a range of academic abilities and is not limited to those identified as 'low achievers' or 'slow learners'. Some students find that conventional approaches to teaching do not always acknowledge their individual strengths or preferred learning styles. Others experience a curriculum that is perceived to be fragmented and detached from the realities of their own lives, and delivered in ways that are rigid and routine. A number of students can remain insufficiently challenged.

The Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (ASTF) is conducting a research project, *Future Directions*, to provide information about possible strategies that it may develop to

target support to students considered to be at risk of leaving school during Years 9 and 10. A report is being prepared for the ASTF that will synthesise the outcomes from a series of focus groups conducted in August 1997 involving practitioners with expertise in developing programs for 15-17 year olds. The Foundation has been engaged in promoting a broadening of the senior school education by including opportunities for students to acquire workplace knowledge and experience, and is now exploring ways in which this work might be extended to include Years 9 and 10.

CBL offers both younger and older teenagers increased opportunities to interact with, and learn from individuals and groups that are located beyond their family and school. Adults other than teachers and parents constitute a potential wealth of knowledge, skills and experience. Today's youth need chances to tap these resources in safe and secure settings, in ways that complement learning and development that is occurring in homes, schools, workplaces and other familiar contexts. CBL provides a framework for making connections: between theory and practice; school and community; as well as education, training and work.

Technology

Recent advances in technology are providing schools and service agencies with unprecedented opportunities not only to access and exchange information electronically, but also to network and cooperate more effectively. In addition to developing links at the local level, both groups can now operate in a global environment. The following examples provide a glimpse of some emerging developments in CBL at an international level.

The Internet

Various World Wide Web sites concerned with service learning have been established, along with mailing lists, bulletin boards and on-line services. Contemporary resources, research, organisations and contacts can also be accessed through databases and information services. One example is the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Service Learning (see http://www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu/).

Several service agencies with an international infrastructure have established web sites and are using information technology to raise awareness of their work and to recruit new members and volunteers. Red Cross International provides information about armed conflict, disasters and emergencies around the world, and the organisation's work in helping people in crisis. The Australian branch of Amnesty International has established a newsletter for schools entitled *Young Conspiracy Network* (see http://www.amnesty.org.au)

The United National Children's Fund (unicef) operates a 'Voices of Youth Development Team' that is encouraging young people to participate in electronic discussion about global futures. Students are being invited to contribute their ideas and discuss "how this world can become a place where the rights of every child are protected, that is the right to live in peace, to have a decent shelter, to be healthy and well nourished, to have clean water, to play, to go to school, and to be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation" (see http://www.unicef.org/voy/misc/whatis.html).

I*EARN Australia is part of the International Educational And Resource Network. The aim of this network is to empower young people at school (Years K-12) to work collaboratively in different parts of the world to share their understanding of each other's cultures and their visions for the future. Students have the opportunity to learn from and contribute to activities such as the 'International Water Monitoring' and the 'Ultraviolet Reduction Ozone Depletion' projects (see http://www.peg.apc.org/~iearn).

4. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

At the macro-level, it is possible to map a diverse range of activity in CBL. Various programs are being implemented, with differing objectives and outcomes. In terms of the partnerships involving schools and service agencies, there is evidence to suggest that participants are actively engaged in activities that are improving student learning and community development. At the same time, however, it would appear that there is considerable potential for adding value to those partnerships.

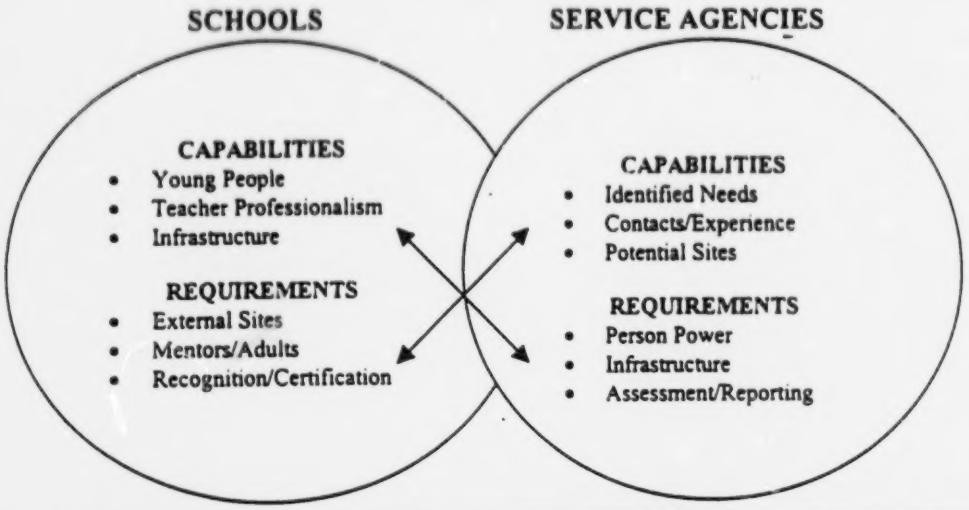
Mapping

Schools and service agencies might consider a collaborative process of mapping their current capabilities and requirements. On the one hand, schools have professional *staff* members who are skilled in matters of curriculum and assessment; *students* who are generally keen to apply and extend their knowledge and skills in 'real-life' settings; and significant *infrastructures* in terms of facilities, equipment and technology. On the other, service agencies have an overview of identified *needs* that exist in the local community; *networks* of volunteers, community workers/educators; and access to a variety of *settings* where CBL might be located.

At the same time, however, both schools and service agencies have specific needs and requirements associated with any further development of CBL. For example, schools need access to a broad range of sites in which students might be placed; strategies for identifying suitable mentors and citizens to support student learning; and mechanisms for ensuring that CBL is recognised and valued within the school and wider community. Service agencies need people who are willing to develop their skills while meeting identified community needs; access to physical and human resources; and support with regard to the assessing and reporting of student achievement.

A selection of capabilities and requirements for both groups are shown in Figure 1. There would appear to be considerable potential for schools and service agencies to explore the nature and extent of their current links with a view to identifying ways in which they might work more together more effectively. Essentially, the objective would be to create 'win-win' situations, whereby the capabilities of one group are used in ways that help meet the needs of the other.

Figure 1 CBL Capabilities and Requirements for Schools and Service Agencies



Innovation

Pilot projects could be introduced in settings where the principles of CBL are well understood. The criteria suggested in Section 3 above could provide a framework not only for research and development, but also for assessing the quality and sustainability of CBL. Considerable potential exists for the development of CBL projects that engage young people in a four-step process, namely,

- **Research** ... students define a problem; create a plan; and collect information - *in a community context*
- **Analysis** students collate data; identify patterns, trends and developments; and formulate key findings - *with appropriate levels of support*
- **Presentation** students present or exhibit the outcomes of their work with a request for response or feedback - *from the school and the community*
- **Reflection** students measure outcomes; record understandings and impact; and suggest strategies for improvement - *in a collaborative framework.*

New forms of collaboration and cooperation between schools and service agencies could be examined. The following examples constitute a selection of projects in which new or value-added partnerships between schools, service agencies and other community groups appear to be operating. Additional information about these projects could be generated and exchanged with a view to encouraging groups to consider adapting some of the more creative elements to suit local situations and requirements.

International Innovation

Service learning has been operating in the USA, the UK and other countries for some time, and in recent years a number of international connections have been established. After studying developments in several countries, Silcox and Leek (1997) argue that a network of international service learning is in its formative stage. Their research reveals that the US Institute for Service Learning is currently establishing a worldwide network, and that an international conference on service learning will be held in London in December 1997.

Community Service Volunteers (CSV) is one organisation in the UK that creates opportunities for people to play an active part in their community through education, volunteering, training and the media. It has produced a guide entitled *Making Links* that offers a strategy for making an initial audit of service learning undertaken in the school. Another initiative from the UK is *Changemakers*, a partnership activity designed to support students in developing and managing their own projects in schools and youth groups. For a description of 'Transition Teams' being trialled in Australia in 1997 see Appendix 1.3.

There are many organisations in the USA involved in the development of service learning. The Corporation for National Community Service, for example, is a federal agency that administers a range of funded programs including AmeriCorps, the National Senior Service Corps, and Learn and Serve America. A survey revealed that in 1994, 37 per cent of US high schools are either operating or planning programs in which students are required to perform a specific number of hours of community service in order to graduate. In the District of Columbia, for example, students are required to perform 100 hours of community service in order to graduate. Atlanta has required 75 hours of service for more than decade (Finn and Vanourek, 1996, 46).

Innovation in Australia

The *Red Cross Community Action Program* is a national initiative that is currently in the planning stages. Building on the successful SCIP program that is managed by Red Cross in Victoria and Volunteer Centres in a number of other States, the focus is on developing community action that is directly linked to the civics and citizenship initiative. Discussions have been held with educational authorities to ensure that this is mainstreamed curriculum and not an extra curricular activity.

There are several *Student Participation* projects currently underway at national and local levels. Essentially, the emphasis is on empowering school students through networking and support. For example, *Connect* is a newsletter supporting student participation that has been in existence for nearly twenty years. Over one hundred issues have been published, containing many examples of learning that have been devised and implemented by students, and four national student participation conferences held (e.g. July 1997).

A pilot *Victorian Youth Development Program* initiated by the Victorian Government in 1997 involves schools working in partnership with groups like St John's Ambulance, Country Fire Authority and the Victorian Police Force. Major objectives include the promotion of community service, leadership and teamwork skills. The Government is funding schools to facilitate the involvement of students in Years 8-12 in programs conducted in association with service providers. Students participate in a two-part program comprising a core competencies and service provider component. The core competencies component involves students attaining, as a minimum requirement, the bronze level of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and a firstaid/CPR qualification. The pilot project involves 850 students in 28 schools in 1997, and will be expanded to 1700 students in 1998.

Support

Leading practitioners of CBL located in schools, service agencies and other groups could be brought together with a view to identifying the collective wisdom and experience that exists across Australia. Existing partnerships could be strengthened and new alliances created. An award system designed to acknowledge and celebrate outstanding achievement could be considered. Institutions and agencies with experience in the training and development of personnel involved in CBL could be identified. So too, could groups that are willing to consider adopting a facilitating or supporting role in the further development of CBL. In summary, greater cooperation between stakeholders could be achieved.

Package

A kit of CBL resource materials for schools and service agencies could be developed. There is an urgent need for contemporary examples of good practice and reports of evaluation activities. A register or database of practitioners and other experts in CBL containing contact details, experience and interests could be compiled. A series of 'how-to' guides could also be developed that would provide information about useful methods and tools that could be used to plan, implement and evaluate CBL effectively.

Technology Platform

There is considerable potential for technology to be used as a means of fostering synergy and support. For example, an Australian Web Site for CBL that is linked strategically to international sites could be established. An electronic mailing list of interested parties with capacity for on-line forums and developments could be developed. Information regarding current research and plans for collaborative projects could be exchanged.

Collaborative Development

Establishing links with groups working in the areas of inter-sectoral and inter-agency cooperation could also be highly valuable. For example, the Australian Centre for Equity through Education has been engaged in a range of initiatives concerned with Full Service Schools during 1996-97. A major emphasis has been on increasing the level of cooperation between workers in education, health and community service agencies (see Appendix 1.8).

CONCLUSION

A diverse range of programs has been implemented in CBL in recent years. Effective links have been established between the education, business and community sectors in Australia, North America and Europe. While there is evidence to suggest that productive outcomes have emerged from a number of programs involving schools and service agencies, it would appear that there is considerable potential for further development.

It will be important that any new work in CBL is collaborative and of high quality. Many groups have been involved in projects designed to improve student learning and achievement while simultaneously contributing to the process of community development. The collective wisdom and expertise of teachers, community workers and administrators alike will need to be documented and disseminated. A commitment among key stakeholders to equitable and long-term resourcing will be required.

At the same time, this work will need to be focussed and sustained. A number of recent policy initiatives of Commonwealth and State governments provide a context for adding value to existing programs and for trialling new approaches. Initiatives in Citizenship Education and Enterprise Education, possibly in Years 5-8 and Years 9-10, for example, could be used as a basis for enhancing partnerships involving schools and service agencies.

Much has been achieved in CBL in Years 11 and 12 through the development of various courses that require students to participate in work or community placements. Students in Years 9 and 10 have also had opportunities to participate in work experience and community service activities. There is even a good deal of CBL activity in the early years, where the involvement of parents and members of the local community in children's education is actively encouraged. While a number of schools have implemented CBL in Years 5-8, it does not appear to be particularly widespread in Australia at this level.

However, in many ways, the middle years of schooling constitute a potential focal point for the further development of CBL. First, research suggests that one of the most significant developmental needs of young adolescents is the development of meaningful relationships - especially with adults other than parents and teachers. Second, the emphasis on an integrated approach to the curriculum in the middle years lends itself naturally to the development of community-based projects in which students can demonstrate high levels of ownership and outcomes. Third, the kinds of knowledge, skills and values that young adolescents can develop through CBL constitute a solid foundation for the development of employment-related competencies and intellectual understandings in later years.

In summary, it is timely that significant review and development of CBL in Australia be implemented. There is already an established knowledge base of theory and practice. There are interesting developments underway in both education and community sectors. The next step is to promote informed debate among stakeholders and practitioners with a view to developing and implementing strategies that will result in improved outcomes for young people and the communities in which they live.

Appendix 1. Examples of Community Based Learning Programs

The following examples of CBL represent a selective rather than a comprehensive list. The activities recorded here have been classified to reflect the dimensions of CBL identified in Table 1, although some are relevant to more than one category. Where possible, the data source for these contemporary examples has been identified should further information be required. Given that the desirability of establishing a data base of good practice is being promoted, publication details of additional case studies would be welcome and should be recorded in Appendix 2 and/or forwarded by e-mail to jcumming@dynamite.com.au

1.1 CHARITY

Many students and school communities are involved fund-raising and promotional activities for registered charities, community organisations such as:

- Bandanna Day and Daffodil Day - Cancer Council (02) 9334 1981
- Forty Hour Famine - World Vision (13 32 40)
- Jump Rope for Heart - National Heart Foundation (06) 282 2144
- Red Nose Day - Sudden Infant Death Association (06) 287 4255
- Red Shield Appeal - Salvation Army (02) 9264 1711
- Walk Against Want - Community Aid Abroad (1800 034 034)

Students sell buttons, ribbons and badges on days of registered appeals; seek sponsorship and donations for participating in physical and cultural activities; sell sweets or other items on behalf of registered charities; conduct car-washes and participate in many other fund-raising activities.

1.2 MOTIVATION

Alternative programs designed to motivate and challenge at-risk or alienated students have been operating for many years. Such programs frequently involve students in hands-on learning, in real-world settings, supported by individuals and community groups.

Westwood Farm
The Lions Youth Haven Westwood Farm operates in the ACT with a view to providing young people - especially the disadvantaged - with basic skills to make for themselves a confident and productive place in society. Working cooperatively with local groups experienced in interacting with young people, the Farm maintains a flexible program that draws on 'the dedicated enthusiasm of a huge army of volunteers'. A commercial nursery and market garden, along with a series of workshops (e.g. fabrics and glass) have been established with the support of public and private interests.
Source: *Canberra Times*, 8 June 1997, p. 18 (Feature article by Richard Begbee).

Recording Music
The multicultural dimension of Maribyrnong Secondary College Victoria (94% of students are from non-English speaking backgrounds), provided the context for a project that acknowledged, utilised and extended students' interest and expertise in music. Supported

by a range of community and industry groups, students recorded their own songs and other original material on a compact disc *Running Water* that is now available on a commercial basis.
Source: *Connect*, 1997, 103, p. 3-6.

Morgan's Place
Morgan's Place is operated by BoysTown Link Up Agency in Kingston, Queensland to connect youth with the community through employment. The agency caters for young people whose backgrounds include juvenile offending, domestic violence and homelessness. A range of enterprise and vocational activities are being implemented such as the manufacture of cubby houses and dog kennels; bicycle repairs and sales; the manufacture of metal products; and nursery and landscaping.
Source: *Youth Options* (1997) March issue, p. 12.

1.3 EMPLOYMENT

Many schools incorporate vocational programs and activities as part of the curriculum. Two of the common objectives of these programs are to increase student understanding of the world of work and to develop employment-related competencies.

Transition Teams
Transition teams enable young people to be both learners and teachers in an active career education program. Students investigate their own choices of post-compulsory education and employment; explore a range of transition issues; and present information from their investigations to other students. Some of the activities undertaken by students involved in these teams include researching available courses and employment opportunities, as well as shadowing trainees in the workplace. A pilot project is being conducted in four states across Australia in 1997, that involves 17 pilot schools and 450 students. In some pilots links have been made with employers and group training companies, as well as Chambers of Commerce and service clubs including Rotary and Lions.
Contact: Judy Turnbull, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, (02) 9267 9222.

Structured Workplace Learning
Structured workplace learning involves senior secondary students in industry placements over an extended period. Students can spend one day per week in a business, industry or agency as part of their school studies. Student learning outcomes that reflect industry-defined competency standards are established in advance of the placement and then assessed by employers. Case studies of six schools from three states involved in the reform of general and vocational curriculum, organisation and teaching are included.
Source: Cumming, J Carbines, B (1997) *Reforming Schools through Workplace Learning*.

School-TAFE-Employment Links
Toolooa State High School in Queensland has initiated a pilot program in partnership with Gladstone TAFE and the Gladstone Group Apprenticeship Scheme. In 1997, a dozen Year 11 students are combining school, TAFE and apprenticeship learning. These students are indentured for metal fabrication apprenticeships, spending three days at school and two at TAFE. They will be paid apprenticeship wages when they are in the workplace for a sixteen-week block release period later in the year. After successful completion of Year 12 next year, they will go on to complete their apprenticeships and have the opportunity to continue their studies (e.g. diplomas or degrees in engineering).
Source: *EQ Australia* (1997) Issue 2, Winter, p. 13.

1.4 ENTERPRISE

Some schools include enterprise education within a context of business studies or commerce courses. Others reflect the creative and dynamic aspects of entrepreneurial activity in a range of programs and activities, which may be developed across the curriculum or implemented as discrete projects (e.g. E-Teams, Young Achievement etc).

Solar Car
Mitcham Girls High School in South Australia has implemented a long-term project that involved most sectors of the school community. Students were involved by means of direct curriculum involvement through subject faculties or extra-curricular activities. The planning, financing and building of a solar car, and the racing of it, involved students from all year levels. Large numbers of teachers, parents, sponsors and community members also contributed to the project and its overall success.
Source: Approaches to Enterprise Education (1995) p. 108-124

Student Management
Salisbury High School in South Australia has drawn up a three year plan, which envisages an enterprise culture permeating all aspects of the curriculum. Starting with Year 8, an extensive school-industry partnership program involves industry personnel and teachers working together to apply the knowledge students gain from the curriculum to workplace applications. Students manage aspects of the school such as the canteen, city farm, bookroom and catering company, using strategies such as Total Quality Management to solve problems.
Source: The Gen (1995) June-July issue, p.3.

Scientific Enterprise
Rosny College in Tasmania developed a science enterprise program by linking the delivery of an applied science curriculum with agricultural enterprises in the nearby Coal River valley. Students completed an applied science course that involved a 200-hour accredited program focussing on enterprises that were either operational in the valley or were at a developmental level. Work placements that involved problem-solving and investigative work were also a feature of the program.
Source: Approaches to Enterprise Education (1995) p. 74-80.

1.5 RESEARCH

Teachers committed to student participation and empowerment often engage students in action research projects. After investigating an issue or problem identified within their local community, students often prepare reports and present their findings and recommendations to audiences beyond the school such as local government, business authorities, professional groups. The Double Helix Club, for example, involves 'young scientists' in a variety of national research projects.

Local History
Twenty students in Years 8-12 at Rosedale State School in Queensland have participated in a project concerned with local history. This involved mapping and recording the historical site of the town cemetery, interviewing long-term residents and producing materials. A booklet has been published and used not only by the Shire as a town record, but also as a curriculum resource for students in Studies of Society and History units.
Source: Connect, 1997, 104, p. 3-4.

Kids Congress for Catchment Care
A pilot conservation project has been implemented in South Australia involving schools, local government, conservation groups and planning authorities. Around 55 schools in three major catchment areas are working to protect the environment and to sustain water quality. The program has been established on collaborative and cooperative principles and is part of the mainstream curriculum. After participant roles and responsibilities have been clarified, specific action plans are developed. There are plans for the pilot project to expand with a national conference scheduled to take place before the end of 1997.
Contact: Ardtornish Primary School (08) 8264 8099.

Community Planning
Students at Nagle College Bairnsdale in Victoria decided to address the issue of boredom among local youth. After forming a team with the neighbouring secondary college, they conducted a mapping of recreational and entertainment facilities and sought the views of young people. In addition to generating a series of youth projects, the team leaders have negotiated a place on a local community planning committee.
Source: *Learning Matters* (1997) Vol 2 No.1 p.14 (article by Anne-Marie Ryan)

1.6 SERVICE

Some schools have established community service programs that involve students working with voluntary groups and agencies. These programs can be implemented as part of formal courses such as studies of society or religion; integrated across the curriculum; or organised as extra curricular activities.

Craft and Performance
Students at Orange Grove Primary School, New South Wales establish and maintain interaction with elderly citizens. Students participate in structured craft projects and learn skills such as crotchet and sewing from the residents. They also perform Christmas and Easter concerts at the home, which have been very well received.
Source: Information supplied by Volunteering NSW (02) 9231 4000.

Ongoing Support
All students in Years 8-10 at Monte St Angelo College in Sydney participate in a SCIP program that involves the provision of support for groups with special needs such as the aged, those with disabilities and the terminally ill. Many of these students continue with the program as an elective subject in Year 11. Some work with individuals at the School for the Blind; the Autistic Centre and the Spastic Centre, while others work in homes for the aged and volunteer centres.
Source: *Sydney Morning Herald* (1996) Article by Graham Williams, 13 May 1996.

Day Care and Entertainment
Students at Moriah College, New South Wales work during their holidays at a day care centre for the elderly. Students assist with meals, play games and provide entertainment for residents of the Burger Centre. Students are required to perform thirty hours of community service as part of their studies.
Source: Information supplied by Jewish Community Services (02) 9369 1400.

1.7 ADVOCACY

Students have demonstrated their capacity to take pro-active roles on a range of issues including social justice, public safety and the environment. After researching a particular issue in depth, students are often empowered to pursue an advocacy role through democratic processes and procedures.

Reconciliation
After organising their own workshop in April 1997, a group of students from Kormilda College in Darwin, participated in the National Reconciliation Convention in June in Sydney. Students obtained financial and other forms of support from the community to enable them to participate. Immediately following the National Convention, students organised a two-day conference at their school to pursue issues concerned with the reconciliation process. Over 100 participants from the local community were involved. Six students have been invited subsequently to participate in a meeting of the National Reconciliation Council to be held in Darwin in August 1997. Students have also commenced planning to conduct a National Youth Reconciliation Conference in June 1998, with a view to developing a Youth Statement on education, health and justice matters.
Source: Paul Tolliday, Kormilda College (08) 8922 1611

Anti-Violence
In response to concerns about escalating violence and racial tension, students at Killester College in Springvale Victoria, established a project team to address these problems. After interviewing a cross-section of community groups, they discussed the issues raised with other students, parents and teachers. A video was produced and launched and is now in use as a community training resource for policy and program development in schools and community agencies.
Source: *Learning Matters* (1997) Vol 2 No.1 p.13 (article by Anne-Marie Ryan)

Community Development
Students and the local community of Karlstad Sweden have been involved in a project concerned with the rebuilding of a derelict hospital in Estonia. A school-industry link program at the Nobel Gymnasiet at Karlstad was developed initially to include students in the application of their skills in the building and construction industry. This was developed further in a humanitarian context with a view to raising awareness of, and providing practical support for, a community with special needs in another country.

[Note: There have been Australian examples of student involvement in the renovation of derelict houses as part of partnerships involving the education and training sectors and the building and construction industry. See for example, The Rockhampton House Project, in Cumming (1993) p.8].

1.8 INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

Full Service Schools

Since its establishment in 1994, the Australian Centre for Equity through Education (ACEE) has addressed the relationship between schools and other institutions and the ways in which action between schools and community services can improve educational outcomes. The Centre has conducted a number of national conferences and published a variety of materials. In her closing remarks to one of those conferences, Joan Kirner commented that a fully serviced school or fully serviced community is about communities that are empowered. In her view, learning is about benefiting all children and their communities; and it is only when three elements come together that we get the full sense of what we mean by Full Service Schools, namely:

- the learning needs to change;
- power structures need to be shared; and
- services need to be integrated.

To make the Full Service Schools concept work we need to exchange information, we need a database. We need to look at the projects that are going and see how we can enhance and strengthen them. We also need a good communications strategy.

Source: ACEE (1996) *Schools and Community Action for Full Service Schools: Making It Work*

Interagency Teams

The Interagency Teams Project is an initiative of the Queensland Education Department. This project supports the development of multi-agency collaborative support teams with a central objective of facilitating a coordinated program of youth advocacy. Key components include the provision of strategic planning and locally targeted training. Interagency teams vary in size from 5-26 persons and include representatives from government and non-government agencies, media, private companies, unions, parents, community volunteers etc. In 1997, around 17 school clusters are cooperating with their communities. Across the state, over 250 human service providers are working together on issues of curriculum development, research, advocacy projects, student support, professional development, forums, expos etc.

Source: Muirhead, B (1977) *State and Local Interagency Work in Queensland - communities and their schools*

Extra Edge

Building on a program that was initiated in 1993, the Victorian Extra Edge Program currently operates across thirteen school clusters that are committed to working in partnership with each other and with local youth/family service providers in supporting students at risk. Developing strategies for promoting resilience in young people, families and communities is a key priority of this program. Resilience is defined in terms of an innate, universal human quality present in individuals, families or communities which strengthens them and empowers them to overcome adversity and move on with their lives in a meaningful way. Clusters of schools are currently working on comprehensive strategies for the promotion of resilience by focussing on supportive relationships; positive expectations; and meaningful participation - in three areas of influence: family, school and community.

Source: James, S (1997) *The Victorian Extra Edge Program*

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[5] The middle years of schooling project (1997). A national project funded by the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs and managed by the Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

[6] See for example Cumming, J (1996) *From alienation to engagement: Opportunities for reform in the middle years of schooling*, ACSA, Canberra

[7] See for example Hill, P (1997) *Towards high standards for all students*, IARTV, Melbourne

Appendix 2. Community Based Learning Response Sheet

This response sheet has been designed for several purposes. First, to establish a CBL register and national network. Second, to identify a more comprehensive range of good contemporary practice in CBL. Third, to generate feedback on the issues raised in this discussion paper. Fourth, to assist those involved in CBL to make a preliminary assessment of one of their programs based on the criteria outlined on pages 10-12 of the paper. If you are interested in establishing a dialogue and working cooperatively on CBL in future, please complete the details below.

1. REGISTER

Name (Title) ..... (Firstname) ..... (Lastname) .....

Position .....

Organisation .....

Postal Address .....

..... (Code) .....

E-mail ..... **Tel** ..... **Fax** .....

2. EXAMPLES

Please record the title, partners and location of any contemporary CBL activities not mentioned in this paper. Please attach additional information in the form of materials, case studies or evaluations.

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3. FEEDBACK

Please record your comments and suggestions on the issues raised in the paper, attaching additional comments where appropriate (e.g. Criteria, Leverage, Technology, Future Directions etc).

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4. CONTRIBUTIONS

Please record your potential contribution to the further development of CBL (e.g. knowledge and expertise, pilot projects, training and professional development, materials, resources etc).

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5. RATING

CBL Project Title .....

Brief Description .....

.....

.....

.....

Contact Person .....

E-mail ..... **Tel** ..... **Fax** .....

CRITERIA	(Please circle rating: 1=low, 5=high)	RATING
COOPERATION		1 2 3 4 5
• Collaborative planning and development are explicit		
• Practical and moral forms of support are provided		
• Human, physical and other resources are shared		
OUTCOMES		1 2 3 4 5
• Intended learning outcomes are negotiated and communicated in advance		
• All participants understand the assessment and reporting procedures		
• All participants are deriving benefit from the experience		
STRUCTURE		1 2 3 4 5
• Adequate preparation is undertaken prior to implementation		
• Tasks, timelines and responsibilities are understood by all parties		
• Learning experiences are coherent and sequenced		
INTEGRATION		1 2 3 4 5
• The student's experience is linked directly to system requirements		
• The experience involve 'real-life'/'real-world' situations and contexts		
• Strategic links are made between education, training and the world of work		
OWNERSHIP		1 2 3 4 5
• The student has a say in the selection and organisation of the experience		
• The student is responsible for essential components of the experience		
• The student exercises reasonable control over his or her learning		
REFLECTION		1 2 3 4 5
• The student analyses and documents significant understandings		
• The student communicates these understandings to others		
• The student considers the implications of the experience		
AUDIENCE		1 2 3 4 5
• Aspects of the student's work are presented to groups beyond those involved		
• The outcomes of the experience are communicated to the wider community		
• External groups are invited to respond to the outcomes of the student's work		
EVALUATION		1 2 3 4 5
• Participants/partners are involved in the review and development of projects		
• External agents and critical friends are involved in the evaluation of projects		
• Both formative and summative evaluation exercises are implemented regularly		

Thank you for completing the CBL Response Sheet. Please forward before 30 September 1997 to:
Jim Cumming, Educational Solutions, PO Box 806 Belconnen ACT 2616 Fax (02) 6255 2072

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